Responsible Pet Ownership Grants Program (Year 3)

Guidelines

ACCESS TO SERVICES

The Office of Local Government is located at:

Levels 1 & 2
5 O'Keefe Avenue   Locked Bag 3015
NOWRA NSW 2541   NOWRA NSW 2541

Phone 02 4428 4100
Fax 02 4428 4199
TTY 02 4428 4209

Level 9, 6 – 10 O'Connell Street   PO Box R1772
SYDNEY NSW 2000   ROYAL EXCHANGE NSW 1225

Phone 02 9289 4000
Fax 02 9289 4099

Email olg@olg.nsw.gov.au
Website www.olg.nsw.gov.au

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Introduction

In response to recommendations of the Companion Animals Taskforce, the NSW Government has committed $900,000 over three years (2014-15 to 2016-17) to a Responsible Pet Ownership Grants Program.

The objectives of the grants program are to help reduce euthanasia rates and dog attacks through funding innovative and collaborative projects that encourage responsible pet ownership.

The focus on innovation and collaboration will help achieve these important goals, avoid duplication of effort, maximise available funding and encourage best practice sharing across councils.

Existing innovative responsible pet ownership projects may be considered for funding to enable the projects to be extended to other councils or the sector as a whole.

Priority will be given to funding projects in areas with one or more of the following:

- Low microchipping and lifetime registration rates;
- Low desexing rates;
- High numbers of menacing and/or dangerous dogs;
- A high incidence of dog attacks; and
- High numbers of roaming cats.

The Office of Local Government reserves the right to amend funding priorities and grant amounts for future rounds of the grants program in response to evaluation of, and feedback received in relation to, the grants program.

Application Process

The Office of Local Government administers the grants program on behalf of the NSW Government.

Only NSW councils may apply for a grant under the grants program:

- An individual council may apply for a grant for a project involving the council and external project partners.

- A coordinating council may apply for a grant for a project involving a group of councils and external project partners. If successful, the coordinating council will receive the grants program funding.

Applications must be made using the prescribed application form appended to these guidelines (Appendix A – Prescribed Application Form).

Completed applications and any attachments **must** be submitted by email to rpogrants@olg.nsw.gov.au unless alternative arrangements have been made with the Office of Local Government.

The deadline time and date for receipt of round two applications and supporting documentation is **5:00pm on Friday, 29 April 2016**.

- Only applications submitted by email using the prescribed application form will be accepted unless alternative arrangements have been made with the Office of Local Government.

- Incomplete or late applications will not be considered. No extensions will be granted.

Assessment Criteria

Proposed projects must meet certain essential criteria to be considered for funding under the grants program.

Projects must:

1. Include monetary or in-kind contributions from the applicant council or councils (projects may also include monetary or in kind contributions from other project partners).

2. Showcase innovative solutions to drive ongoing responsible pet ownership (mechanisms and opportunities for councils to share innovative approaches may also be included).

3. Showcase collaborative approaches involving the applicant council or councils and other project partners, such as government agencies, animal welfare organisations and industry stakeholders (for instance, local breeders, veterinarians and pet retailers) to maximise available grant funding and encourage best practice.

4. Clearly articulate benefits to the community.

5. Target one or more of the following:

    a. Areas with low microchipping and/or lifetime registration rates.
    b. Areas with low desexing rates.
    c. Areas with high numbers of menacing and/or dangerous dogs.
    d. Areas with a high incidence of dog attacks.
    e. Areas with high numbers of roaming cats

6. Include a targeted promotional campaign/community education component to support successful implementation (the Office of Local Government reserves the right to use materials produced from grant funding at its discretion).

7. Align with the Community Strategic Plan, Delivery Program and Operational Plan of the council or councils. Contributions to be made by the council or councils to the project should be reflected in the Resourcing Strategy of the council or councils.

Supporting Information for Applicants

Project funding

Eligible projects will be funded by NSW councils and the NSW Government. Other project partners may also choose to contribute funding.

A total of $300,000 (GST inclusive) in grant funding is available under Round 3 of the grants program:

- Individual councils may apply for funding to match the *council's* contribution to the total cost of a project to a maximum of $15,000.

- Groups of councils may apply for funding to match the *councils'* contribution to the total cost of a project to a maximum of $50,000.

Councils' contributions can be made up of monetary and/or in kind support.

Below are examples of how match funding would be applied.

Example 1: Application from individual council:

Project Partner	Project Contribution
Council	$12,500
NSW Government (RPO Grants Program)	$12,500
Animal welfare agency	$10,000
Total available funding	**$35,000**

Example 2: Application from a group of councils:

Project Partner	Project Contribution
Council 1	$30,000
Council 2	$20,000
Council 3	$10,000
NSW Government (RPO Grants Program)	$50,000
Animal welfare agency	$10,000
Total available funding	**$120,000**

Identifying target communities

Councils should use data from the NSW Companion Animals Register to identify target communities for project funding. These communities might be located in areas with low identification and registration rates, low desexing rates, high numbers of menacing and/or dangerous dogs, high numbers of dog attacks or high numbers of roaming cats.

Councils may wish to target areas of high socio-economic disadvantage. These include areas with low levels of average income, high levels of unemployment or high levels of public housing accommodation.

Councils will be aware of such areas in their local government area. However, they may also wish to consider the Socio-Economic Index for Areas (SEIFA) produced by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) to determine relevant target areas. More information about SEIFA can be found on the ABS website:

http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Latestproducts/2039.0Main%20Features12006?opendocument&tabname=Summary&prodno=2039.0&issue=2006&num=&view

Determining the eligibility of participants

For projects that target communities with high socio-economic disadvantage, councils should deploy a mechanism to identify suitable applicants for assistance under the projects. While certain geographic areas may contain high numbers of people who would normally be discouraged from microchipping or desexing their animals due to financial constraints, not all members of the target area may require such assistance.

Factors for councils to consider in determining the eligibility of pet owners for relevant responsible pet ownership program services may include:

- The person is a pensioner or has a Health Care Card.
- Other ongoing extenuating financial circumstances exist which are preventing the person from microchipping or desexing their pet.

Note: pet owners who fall outside the high socio-economic disadvantage definition may still participate in grants program projects, but councils should consider how best to provide services to these participants on a fee-for-service basis.

The importance of community education

Councils applying for grant funding must also commit to including an education component in their project. Targeted projects are most effective when accompanied by education about responsible pet ownership. This supports a culture of responsible pet ownership in communities where the projects are run, rather than merely providing a free or inexpensive one-off service which is used and quickly forgotten.

As well as providing pet owners with responsible pet ownership information and engaging them in discussion about responsible pet ownership at the time of contact (for example, when bringing their pet in to be desexed), projects should be supported with other education/promotion that reinforces key responsible pet ownership messages.

This could include (but is not limited to):

- Use of local social media groups.
- Distribution of material (for example, brochures or flyers) by post or through other relevant channels (for example, Centrelink, local pet stores etc.).
- Information at local parks and off-leash areas in the targeted area.
- One-to-one engagement in areas where pet owners take their dogs (for example, dog training and socialisation activities).
- Promotions on local radio or in local newspapers.

Examples of Responsible Pet Ownership projects

Sharing better practice

Councils already undertaking innovative practice to promote responsible pet ownership may use this funding opportunity to *enhance and expand* the scope of the project. This could include partnering with neighbouring councils, developing materials for use across the State or undertaking an education campaign with an animal welfare agency.

> Program funding is not intended to reimburse council for existing spending but, rather, to support new innovative practice.

Microchipping and registration programs

Projects may offer free or discounted microchipping to encourage animal owners to comply with their obligation to have their cat or dog identified. Microchipping also presents an opportunity to educate animal owners about responsible pet ownership practices and assists councils in ensuring compliance with the enforcement of the lifetime registration requirements of the *Companion Animals Act 1998*.

Microchipping assists in reuniting lost animals with their owners. This reduces numbers of unclaimed animals and euthanasia rates.

Projects may also target specific communities where other social disadvantages affect microchipping, registration and/or desexing rates, for example, communities where English is a second language.

Desexing programs

Targeted desexing programs are recognised as being a highly effective way of addressing pet overpopulation. Targeted desexing programs refer primarily to one-off, short-term campaigns focussed on areas of identified need. They commonly involve subsidised or free desexing, depending on available resources.

Targeted desexing has also been recognised as effective in reducing the number of unmicrochipped animals, as the campaigns often involve simultaneous subsidised or free microchipping.

Targeted desexing programs appear to achieve especially positive results when focussed on areas of socio-economic disadvantage by providing an incentive to pet owners who might normally struggle to meet the cost of desexing and therefore avoid registering their animal due to the higher cost for undesexed animals.

Other communities, for example, those with a population from non-English speaking backgrounds, may also benefit from tailored education in key community languages that promotes responsible pet ownership messages.

<u>Targeted responsible pet ownership education</u>

Rates of dog attacks and menacing and dangerous dog declarations may be higher in some communities. Projects that promote effective control of dogs, improved socialisation in both public and private areas and other appropriate dog training relating to responsible pet ownership may also be considered for funding.

<u>Collaborations</u>

Responsible pet ownership projects delivered in partnership with animal welfare agencies and/or veterinarians and others can be effective ways of reaching target groups in the community.

An example is RSPCA NSW's <u>Community Animal Welfare Scheme</u> (CAWS), which has been delivered in partnership with some NSW councils.

Councils may also choose to partner with agencies such as Housing NSW to work with specific target groups in the community.

Assessment Process

An assessment panel comprising Office of Local Government officers and representatives of the local government sector will assess applications against the criteria outlined in these guidelines and make recommendations to the Chief Executive of the Office of Local Government.

Councils will be advised in writing of the outcome of their application and grant funds will be disbursed in the first quarter of 2016-17.

Conditions of Grant Funding

It is the responsibility of the project sponsor/s (the General Manager or General Managers of the applicant council or councils) to ensure compliance with the conditions of the grant, as outlined below.

1. Round three grants program funding will be released to successful applicants on receipt of an agreement signed by the General Manager or General Managers of the applicant council or councils.

2. The project should have commenced, and all funding allocations for the project been made, by 1 April 2017.

3. All round three grants program funding should be spent by 30 June 2017. The Office of Local Government may, at its discretion, require immediate repayment of unspent grants program funding.

4. If a council or group of councils is unable to proceed with the funded project for any reason, the applicant council must immediately inform the Office of Local Government in writing and repay any grants program funding.

5. Arrangements should be in place to collect relevant data to inform the project report required for the grant acquittal at the conclusion of the program. This may include ensuring there is a system available to track participation in the project or the number of animals treated etc.

6. In the event of any variation to the project, the council must notify the Office of Local Government in writing as soon as is practicable.

7. Council/s should publicly acknowledge any contribution to the project made under the Responsible Pet Ownership Grants Program, for example, in publicity about the project.

8. Any animal that is desexed as part of a project funded under the Responsible Pet Ownership Grants Program must also be microchipped and registered, as required under the *Companion Animals Act 1998*, unless otherwise exempt under the Act.

9. If an applicant breaches any of the conditions of these guidelines, the Office of Local Government reserves the right to withhold or reclaim the grant funding in part or in whole at its sole discretion.

10. The Office of Local Government reserves the right to use, duplicate or replicate educational, promotional or other responsible pet ownership materials produced by councils using Responsible Pet Ownership Grants Program funding at its discretion.

Project Reporting

Successful councils will be required to email a project report to rpogrants@olg.nsw.gov.au by 30 September 2017, unless alternative arrangements have been made with the Office of Local Government.

The project report must include:

1. A detailed statement of expenditure.

2. Details of the outcomes of the project, including such information as:

    a. Responsible pet ownership outcomes achieved.

    b. Innovations or better practice achieved through project implementation.

    c. Success (or otherwise) of collaborative arrangements for project delivery.

d. Number of animals treated (microchipped, registered or desexed), as relevant.

e. Feedback received from participants or other stakeholders.

f. Any significant challenges faced in implementing the project and how these were overcome (if relevant).

g. Any other project outcomes of note.

3. Photographs, video clips, social media clips or other evidence of project implementation.

Further Information

Program Delivery Team
Investigations and Performance Group
NSW Office of Local Government

Telephone no: 1300 134 460
Email: rpogrants@olg.nsw.gov.au

Responsible Pet Ownership Grants Program
Funding Application Form

A Word version of this form is available on the website of the Office of Local Government. Please type your answer into each section and ensure that original signatures are provided in the Project Sponsor Declaration section. The completed and signed application form should be scanned and emailed as an attachment to rpogrants@olg.nsw.gov.au by **5:00pm on Friday, 29 April 2016**.

Applicant Details	
Applicant council (*one council to submit the application in the case of a group application*)	
Name of council officer completing application on behalf of council/s	
Telephone (work)	
Email (work)	
Grant Funding Administration	
Name of council officer who will administer the grant funding	
Telephone (work)	
Email (work)	
Project Management	
Name of council officer who will manage the project	
Telephone (work)	
Email	

Project Details	
Project title	
Local government area/s (*insert all local government areas in the case of a group application*)	
NSW state electorate/s (*insert all NSW state electorates in the case of a group application*)	
Project start and end dates	
External project partner organisations (non-council)	
Project summary	*Provide a brief overview of the project*

Project Details (continued)		
Alignment with assessment criteria – innovation	*Outline how the project represents innovative practice*	
Alignment with assessment criteria – collaboration	*Outline collaboration with project partners*	
Alignment with assessment criteria - target areas	*Tick (✔) those target areas that the project addresses*	
	Low microchipping and/or lifetime registration rates	
	Low desexing rates	
	High numbers of menacing and/or dangerous dogs	
	High incidence of dog attacks	
	High numbers of roaming cats	

Project Details (continued)	
Alignment with assessment criteria - targeted promotional activities/community education	*Outline proposed promotional and community education activities*
Anticipated project outcomes *(measurable outcomes wherever possible)*	*Outline the outcomes to be achieved if the project is implemented*
Anticipated community benefits *(measurable benefits wherever possible)*	*Outline how the community benefit from the project*

Project Details (continued)	
Arrangements for project monitoring and reporting	*What arrangements will be made to enable project monitoring and reporting?*

Estimated Project Income (including in-kind contributions)	
Total council contribution/s *(the amount must at least match the total grant funding)*	$
Total grant funding	$
Total external project partner contributions	$
Total estimated project income	**$**

Estimated Project Expenditure (including in-kind contributions)

1. Goods and services (banners, print and other media, brochures, signage, other, e.g., microchips, design and printing etc.)

Line item, including calculation methodology	Council contribution/s	Grant funding amount	External project partner contribution	Total
Example 1: 3 x local newspaper articles @ $400 per article	$1,200	$0	$0	$1,200
Example 2: 50 x microchips @ $15 per microchip	$0	$750	$0	$750
Line item 1	$	$	$	$
Line item 2	$	$	$	$
Line item 3	$	$	$	$
Line item 4 etc. (add more rows if needed)	$	$	$	$

2. Human resources (project specific accounting, implementation, project management, reporting, sub-contracting etc.)

Line item, including calculation methodology	Council contribution/s	Grant funding amount	External project partner contribution	Total
Example: 2 x rangers @ $200 per ranger per day at two community education days	$0	$800	$0	$800
Line item 1	$	$	$	$
Line item 2	$	$	$	$
Line item 3	$	$	$	$
Line item 4 etc. (add more rows if needed)	$	$	$	$

Estimated Project Expenditure (including in-kind contributions) (continued)

3. Other (external project partner workshops, project specific information and communications technology, expenses, transport, any other expenses not covered by the above categories etc.)

Line item, including calculation methodology	Council contribution/s	Grant funding amount	External project partner contribution/s	Total
Example: 2 x external project partner workshops @ $400 per workshop	*$0*	*$0*	*$800*	*$800*
Line item 1	*$*	*$*	*$*	*$*
Line item 2	*$*	*$*	*$*	*$*
Line item 3	*$*	*$*	*$*	*$*
Line item 4 etc. (add more rows if needed)	*$*	*$*	*$*	*$*
Total estimated project expenditure				**$**

Project Sponsor Declaration

I confirm that the project proposed in this application has been approved by Council's governing body and aligns with Council's adopted policies and integrated planning and reporting framework. Should Council's application be successful, I confirm that I will accept the conditions of the grant on behalf of Council by signing a funding agreement issued by the Office of Local Government. (*General Manager/s to confirm agreement with this statement by signing below. All General Managers to sign in the case of a group application*)

Council 1	
General Manager's name	
Signature	Date

Council 2 (if applicable)	
General Manager's name	
Signature	Date

Council 3 (if applicable)	
General Manager's name	
Signature	Date

Council 4 (if applicable) (*add more tables if needed*)	
General Manager's name	
Signature	Date